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Media Contact: Douglas Rivlin (202) 225-8203

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**(Chicago, IL):** – *The following is a statement by Rep. Luis V. Gutierrez (D-IL):*

When I make important decisions I try to think about Roberto Clemente.

Roberto Clemente had everything. A great career. A rifle arm. A big contract. Fans who adored him.

And yet, he risked it all to help others. He made a decision that was entirely unselfish. A decision about the greater good of his people. He took on the dictator of Nicaragua, got on a small plane, overloaded with relief supplies, flew into a storm – and gave his life for others.

I'm not here to compare myself to Clemente. Not at all. Few people will ever earn that comparison. But I am here to say that as I think about making a decision like running for Mayor of Chicago, I try to learn from his example.

And the example he set was this: when you make a decision, do it based on what is best for your people.

I love the City of Chicago. I would love to be Mayor of the City of Chicago, and I believe I could do great things for people. For Latinos, for African-Americans, for immigrants, for gays and lesbians, for every person in Chicago who wants a better future for themselves and their families.

I believe I could make a difference.

And I believe our campaign is in very strong shape. We have lots of funding, and commitments for more. We have plenty of signatures on petitions. We have enthusiasm and support and volunteers. We have a poll that says we are in a very strong position and that the Latino community in particular would rally to my candidacy.

It's an exciting and important opportunity.

And so I have weighed that excitement and that opportunity and that possibility alongside of my current opportunity. And my current **obligation**.

I'm honored to serve in Congress. My constituents have sent me back many times. I take their trust seriously. I'm humbled by it.

And across this nation, immigrants are counting on me too. The people I've talked about today in detail. The people I've met in Jersey City and Tampa, in El Paso and San Jose, in Cleveland and Phoenix.

Today, our immigrant community is under attack – but we're fighting back. And I am fortunate enough to be on the frontlines of the battle. Fortunate to stand up for families that are being

torn apart and moms and dads who are being deported. To have a direct line to the President of the United States to say "you have to do more." To go to Phoenix to say "what you are doing here is unjust and must be stopped." To walk the streets of Pilsen and Little Village and give people hope. To debate anti-immigrant leaders wherever we find them – from the ballot box to the television talk shows.

It's a tough time for those of us who believe in fairness for immigrants. But history is not written by those who give up.

And history is not written by those who change battles in the middle of the fight.

Today I tell you that I have an obligation to all of my constituents and all of the immigrant families I have met and learned from across this country. I have an obligation to not give up the fight for fairness, for justice and for finally passing comprehensive immigration reform.

I have an obligation not to give up on the fight I've already begun.

I have unfinished business to complete.

So I will not be a candidate for Mayor of the City of Chicago.

This is an extremely difficult decision, and I thank with all my heart the people who have been working so hard and supporting my candidacy.

But it is a decision I make knowing it is the right thing to do. There is one and only one reason I am not running -- I'm already engaged in the most important battle I can commit my energy and time and devotion to winning. I am one-hundred percent committed to fighting for fairness and justice for immigrants, and to continue the battle for comprehensive immigration reform.

Standing up for immigrants, and finishing this battle, and winning this fight is far more important than whatever personal disappointment I might feel in not making the race for Mayor of the City of Chicago.

I love Chicago. I've reached out to other candidates today to tell them I'm not running and to wish them well. I will be engaged in this race and will still be a voice for fairness for all of the people of Chicago. For jobs. For better schools. For safe streets.

But I will be that voice while I continue my obligations as Congressman and my crusade for comprehensive immigration reform.

I know today – that even though I believe we would have mounted a great campaign, an important campaign, a winning campaign – this is the right decision for the people I represent and for people who count on me.

So I thank you. Today is not the end of a fight – it's the continuation of a struggle for justice – and I invite all of you to join me in this very important crusade. Because with all of you – together – we will win.

Thank you very much.

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